

April 1996

Step by Step: All Things are Possible!

KEEPING IN TOUCH

If you have faith as a mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, move from here to there, and it shall move, and nothing shall be impossible to you."

When the Board of Elders selected the theme for last year's General Conference — *All Things Are Possible!* — little did we know the mountains we would be confronting in the months ahead. Following a

COVER STORY REV. ELDER DON EASTMAN

unanimous action of the General Council in March of 1995, an offer was placed to purchase a beautiful complex in West Hollywood, a facility large enough to accommodate both the needs of our "mother" church, MCC Los Angeles, and the UFMCC's global headquarters. To understand the magnitude of this effort, consider that this is the largest property acquisition ever attempted in the 28-year history of Metropolitan Community Churches. And, although this facility is located in one of the world's most strategic cities for gay-lesbian-bisexual-transgendered communities, West Hollywood has some of the strictest property regulations in North America. In the face of this incredible opportunity and seemingly insurmountable obstacle it

became clear that what we are attempting is both impossible and mandatory.

So, for the past year, it seems like we have been attempting to move three mountains. The first is the \$1,000,000 cash down payment (plus closing costs) toward the \$3,800,000 purchase price. When the offer to purchase was made, the UFMCC had no cash assets with which to make any kind of down payment. MCC Los Angeles had lost most of its financial net worth as a result of the 1994 earthquake; it received \$293,000 net from the sale of its empty property. Now, we have accumulated more than \$1,300,000 in cash and pledges, success is in view, and this first mountain is looking more like a speed bump.

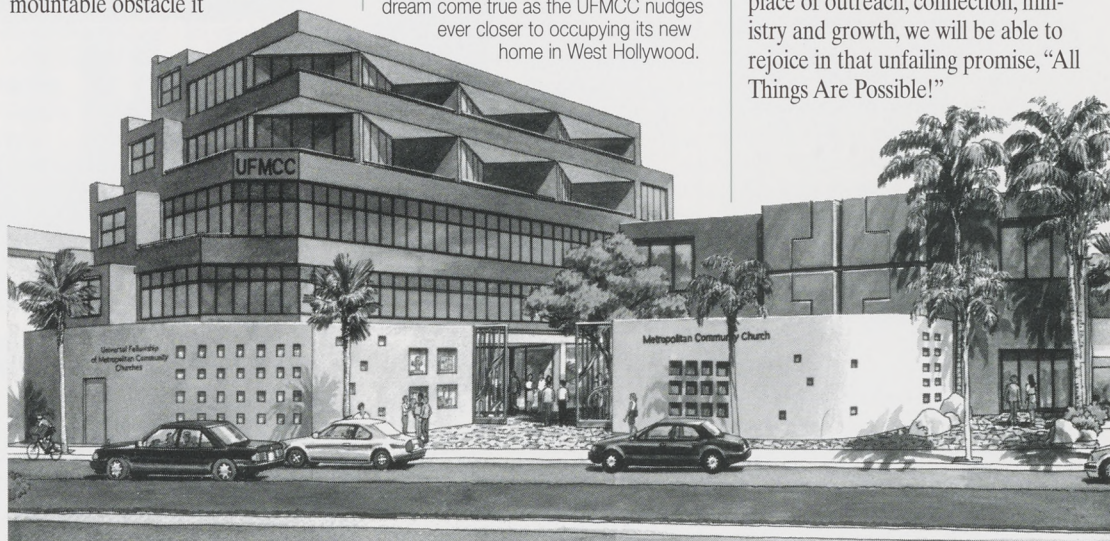
The second mountain is the financing of the remaining \$2,800,000 of the purchase price. A contingency in our purchase contract calls for the assumption of an existing note. We recently learned this would not be possible. However, the sellers secured other lenders to make a tentative commitment for financing within terms of the pur-

chase agreement. Final approval of this financing proposal will clear the second mountain out of our path.

The third mountain confronting our efforts has been the need to obtain a major conditional use permit from the City of West Hollywood, which allows the property to be used as a place of public assembly for worship. Although the site of this facility has 60 offstreet parking spaces, city planning staff determined that an additional 25 spaces would be required. On March 20, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority of Los Angeles agreed to lease the extra 25 spaces to the UFMCC and MCC Los Angeles, and we have now been notified that our application for the conditional use permit will be acted upon by the city's planning commission on May 16. We expect to be able to close escrow as soon as the city grants a conditional use permit, and this third mountain has been removed.

This entire experience has been one step of faith after another. Every prayer, every volunteer effort, every contribution or pledge, whether large or small, has been an act of faith. When this wonderful goal has been reached, and we occupy this new place of outreach, connection, ministry and growth, we will be able to rejoice in that unfailing promise, "All Things Are Possible!"

■ **Moving mountains to** make a dream come true as the UFMCC nudges ever closer to occupying its new home in West Hollywood.



"Bests" and Bears . . .

River City MCC in Sacramento, California is experiencing a tremendous response to its televised worship services, broadcast each Saturday. □

MCC Portland, Oregon celebrated its 20th anniversary last month. □ A worship group from the Bowdon-Carrolton, Georgia area have recently affiliated with **First MCC of Atlanta** as a parish extension. The group has been meeting regularly for the past several months. □ **MCC Louisville**, Kentucky has begun a healing service on the third Sunday of each month which it calls Circle of Life. □ **Chicago-area MCC churches** will sponsor a worship service for participants of the International Mr. Leather activities in May. It will be held at the Congress Hotel, headquarters of the event, and more information is available from Rob Hadley at 708/325-8488. □ **Trinity MCC** in Arlington, Texas planned to move into modular buildings on the site of its new church home on Easter Sunday. Rev. Jo Crisco explains that worship and office space will be located in the modular units until the new structure is completed. □

MCC of the Incarnation, Oak Park, Illinois, was designated "best house of worship for gays and lesbians to worship" on a local "Best of Chicago" list. □ **Muskegon MCC** has changed its name to **Lighthouse of Hope MCC**, reflecting its ministry in the Western Michigan coastal area. □ A new MCC church is being formed in the **Hagerstown**, Maryland area. It's first service in February attracted over 70 participants. □ **Christ Chapel MCC**, Santa Ana, California, will celebrate its 25th anniversary on Sunday, April 21. □ **MCC Mobile**, Alabama dedicated its new Government Street building in early March. □ It's new-building season in Mississippi! **MCC of the Rainbow**, Jackson, is acquiring a new building, as is **MCC of the Gulf Coast** in Biloxi. □ The Appalachian Bear Club has made a generous gift of \$1,500 to the deacon's pantry of **MCC Knoxville**, Tennessee. The money was raised at the Bear Club's annual Santa Bear Tea. □ **Victory Arrow MCC** of Springfield, Missouri is experiencing a huge growth of involvement since the installation of pastor Mark Williams one year ago. The church has become more involved in community activities in the Springfield region. □ **MCC of the Lehigh Valley**, Allentown, Pennsylvania, and **MCC El Paso**, Texas, have been granted Commissioned Church status by the UFMCC.

Council Meetings Punctuated by "Firsts"

Following in the footsteps of our last General Conference, the recently-completed meetings of the General Council offered several historic moments. For the first time in UFMCC history, a representative of Global Outreach was seated on the council with both voice and vote. Rev. Jorge Sosa, pastor of ICM Renovacion, Mexico City, taught us all just how much alike we are in both our concerns and celebrations.

Because of Rev. Sosa's presence, the council meeting was bilingual for the first time. Materials were translated into Spanish for his pre-council packet, and Rev. Ramon Flores and Ana Vargas were on-site to translate during the meeting. Rev. Sosa also brought the message for General Council's closing worship service.

Another historic moment occurred when Patricia Ireland, president of the National Organization for Women (U.S.), spoke. The General Council endorsed NOW's Fight the Right March in San Francisco on April 14, and will sponsor a UFMCC contingent in the march. The council also passed a resolution affirming marriage between persons of the same gender, a resolution which appears in this issue.

Perhaps the most enlightening moment happened during the forum on African-American clergy when council members shared openly and honestly about concerns for developing more leadership roles for people of color within the UFMCC, and in educating our congregations about the realities of racism throughout the world. From this discussion, several recommendations were adopted.

Another forum highlighted issues of leadership development. It will be continued in October and focus on developing lay leadership in the denomination. JoNee Shelton, chair of the

Commission on Laity, will be invited to participate at that meeting to increase the voice of laity. Currently, only two laypersons serve on Council, Elder Larry Rodriguez and myself.

History was also made by way of these council meetings only lasting three days, proving that we have indeed learned to "work smarter," with tasks being accomplished by committees and groups in advance of the general meeting.

In addition to receiving routine reports, time was spent clarifying the new credentialing process, and Council expressed its gratitude to Rev. Pat Bumgardner and Rev. Steve Torrence for their continued diligence on the transition team. In addition, 16 members of General Council participated in the first supervising clergy

■ **Patricia Ireland**, president of the National Organization for Women, was a visitor at the recent General Council meetings. The Council endorsed NOW's April march in San Francisco.



training session conducted by Samaritan Institute for Religious Studies.

Each MCC church will soon receive detailed minutes of all business conducted by the Council.

Leadership Conference: Ministry in a Changing World

Experts in the fields of communication and social trends have projected massive changes within churches over the next few decades. In anticipation of the impact of these shifts upon MCC congregations, 1996 UFMCC Leadership Conference, "The Gospel for a Global Generation," will focus on equipping MCC ministry to meet current and future opportunities and challenges in this changing environment.

Leadership Conference will present a wide range of topics, including the Ministry of Diversity in Spiritual Community, two institutes, workshops, inspirational worship services daily, and several plenaries with guest speakers. Marsha Raulston will be featured plenary speaker on women in leadership. She is currently vice president of customer satisfaction for Global Village Communications and president of the board of trustees of Samaritan Institute for Religious Studies.

Leadership Conference will also showcase a technology center! Displays and sessions

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Sherman Hicks
will be special guest preacher at all worship services.



Eric H. F. Law
is among presenters of Conference Institutes.

will present diverse topics from network options to web pages, router and hubs, to print servers and Internet service providers. Hardware and software vendors will be invited to provide special pricing during the conference. Experts will be available to answer the simplest to most complex questions. All to help the local church and congregation enhance ministry by taking advantage of the latest technology.

Leadership Conference will be held Thursday, August 1 through Sunday, August 4 at the Burbank Airport Hilton in Burbank, California. Look for more information in promotional mailings and future issues of *Keeping in Touch*!

UFMCC EMPLOYMENT

UFMCC Employment Opportunities

Persons are being sought to fill two employment opportunities at Fellowship headquarters:

Director of Communications

Dynamic individual sought to manage external public relations with media, ecumenical groups and other organizations. Will manage internal information systems within UFMCC, manage online/Internet communications, and assist in translation projects.

Qualifications/skills: Experience in dealing with media and public relations, good writing and verbal skills, computer online familiarity, and ecumenical awareness.

Director of Clergy Development

Duties include but are not limited to:

Administration

- Taking action on requests for leaves of absence.
- Handling retirement issues and requests.
- Insuring the maintenance of all clergy

files after the point of ordination.

- Monitoring and reviewing the credentialing system (at least once every two years).
- Preparing the budget for Clergy Development.
- Preparing Steering Committee reports to the General Council and General Conference.
- Processing equivalency appeals.
- Maintaining daily office operations.
- Processing and maintaining the documents for judiciary.
- Attending various Board of

Ordained Ministry meetings.

- Attending General Council meetings, as required.
- Chairing the Steering Committee meetings.

Resourcing

- Providing information for potential new clergypersons.
- Identifying resources for the continuing education program to meet the existing and future needs of UFMCC clergy.
- Identifying resources related to the professional development of clergy.
- Developing resources to assist churches with the pastoral search process.
- Actively maintaining an accurate list of churches seeking pastors and pastors seeking churches and exchanging this information with District Coordinators, Administrator of Global Outreach, Boards of Ordained Ministry and others, as needed.

- Maintaining a resource list for clergy care and concerns.
- Maintaining a compilation of proficiency standards representing the requirements of the various districts.
- Compiling and maintaining a list of comparable seminaries that meet the proficiency expectations of the UFMCC credentialing process.
- Pursuing up-to-date resources on clergy needs, concerns and development.
- Identifying resources for available psychological and vocational testing.

Training

- Chairing the Steering Committee meetings.
- Attending various Board of Ordained Ministry meetings, as requested.

Qualifications/Skills:

Master's Degree preferred, good computer skills, extensive experience within UFMCC, strong organizational skills.

Both positions have excellent salaries and benefits. Fax or mail resumes to Ravi Verma/Dana Cagle at the following address: 5300 Santa Monica Blvd. #304, Los Angeles, CA 90029, (213)464-2123
Resumes must be received no later than April 25, 1996.



DOING JUSTICE

Rev. Mel White

I stood on the roof of our home in Pasadena watching the brush fire race toward us, consuming everything in its fiery path. Trees exploded into flame. Billowing smoke darkened the sun. The garden hose in my hand could not stop the conflagration; I knew our family home would soon burn to the ground.

Then suddenly, giant helicopters attacked the fire with tons of water from the sky. At that moment, an army of fire fighters appeared, mobilized from surrounding cities. Just when all seemed lost, they saved the day.

At this moment, God's lesbian and gay children in the United States stand on the roofs of their homes, watching another kind of holocaust sweep down from the radical right. The brush fire of opposition to same-gender marriage has become a full-scale conflagration. In 19 states, anti-marriage bills threaten our freedom to share fully and equally in the rights, responsibilities, and commitment of civil marriage. See if your state is on the list: Alabama, Alaska, California, Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming.

Sisters and brothers, this battle is not about marriage. The extremists are waging war against civil rights endowed us by our Creator and guaranteed to citizens of the United States by its Constitution. In the next 18 months, the Hawaii Supreme Court could decide to grant us what we have long been denied, the benefits which come with a license to marry:

- Government benefits and other tax advantages
- Joint tax returns and tax advantages
- Joint parental custody and joint insurance for property and family health
- Automatic inheritance rights, the right to make medical decisions for a partner
- Bereavement or sick leave, wrongful death benefits, hospital visitation rights
- Immigration for partners, domestic violence protection orders

If ever you and your congregation have considered mobilizing to do justice, do it now! Here are ways to make a difference:

The Marriage Resolution is printed here. Rev. Perry asks that every UFMCC congregation endorse it and return it to add their name to this critical effort. Find the interfaith coalition in your town or state and volunteer for service. Local activist groups may be able to direct you, or contact Evan Wolfson at the Marriage Project, 666 Broadway, 12th Floor, New York 10012, 212/995-8585, EW LLDEF@aol.com. Get the names and addresses of your governor and state legislators and begin a letter, e-mail, phone or fax campaign to inform and inspire them to do what is right. Use every holy union, every anniversary celebration, every engagement announcement to help people understand our commitment to responsible, long-term relationships.

The arsonists from the radical right are rushing across the nation setting fires that threaten to consume the civil rights of God's people. We ask for the prayers of our UFMCC sisters and brothers in other lands to help put out this blaze. With God's help we can join hands with our friends and allies and fight this holocaust together.

General Council, during its recent meetings, approved the following resolution: Whereas some of the earliest recorded Christian marriages were between people of the same gender; Whereas clergy in UFMCC have conducted commitment ceremonies between people of the same gender since 1968; Whereas Holy Union and Holy Matrimony between two people regardless of gender are among the Rites and Sacraments of UFMCC; and Whereas UFMCC is committed to equity and justice for all people: Therefore, be it resolved that the General Council of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches endorses the right of two people regardless of gender to enter into legally recognized marriages. We applaud the efforts of those who bring about equality in this area. We encourage individuals in other states, provinces and countries to work toward equity in the legal recognition of same-gender marriages. Further, we stand in opposition to legislation which would deny recognition of same-gender marriages or penalize individuals who conduct such marriages or unions, and pledge to continue ceremonies of commitment between individuals regardless of gender, even in the face of opposition or penalty.

The Marriage Resolution Because marriage is a basic human right and an individual personal choice, RESOLVED that the State should not interfere with same-gender couples who choose to marry and share fully and equally in the rights, responsibilities, and commitment of civil marriage.

Church _____

City, State _____

Send this completed resolution to Evan Wolfson, Lambda Legal Defense, 666 Broadway, Suite 1200, New York, NY 10012.

Constrictors, Comedy

Rev. Lew Broyles has celebrated his third anniversary at MCC Milwaukee. □

Rev. Claudia Wolf has accepted the pastorate of MCC Pueblo, Colorado. □

Rev. Fran Mayes has been appointed to the Serving Council of Evangelical and Ecumenical Womens Caucus, an organization for lesbian and straight women working together in a Christian context. □

Alice Urbanowicz has been selected to pastor New Hope MCC of Santa Rosa, California. □ **Rev. Frank Beard** has been called as pastor of MCC New Haven, Connecticut. □

Rev. Michael England of MCC of Greater Hayward, California, and **Rev. Clark Bufkin**, International Mr. Daddy Bear, conducted an MCC-sponsored worship at this year's International Bear Rondevous in San Francisco in February. □ **Judy Dale**, coordinator of the Great Lakes District, received the "Outstanding Service" award from Samaritan Institute for Religious Studies at the annual board of trustees meeting in February. □

Rev. Sandra Turnbull was elected pastor of MCC Long Beach, California in March. □ A number of Southern California MCC members will participate in the annual California AIDS Ride in June, including **R. J. Wells**, member of the board of directors of First MCC of Orange County, Costa Mesa, California. □

Rev. L. Jonathan Loppnow was honored as founding pastor of MCC Manhattan, Kansas as the church held special celebrations in February. □ **Rev. Mary Merriman**, former pastor of Vision of Hope MCC, Mountville, Pennsylvania, has been named recipient of the 1996 Jean Royer Kohr Award, presented by the Womens Alliance of Pennsylvania. □

Rev. Dr. Bill Rethford was elected pastor of MCC of the Blue Ridge, Roanoke, Virginia in February. **Rev. Rethford** comes to Virginia from Sarasota, Florida. □ **Judy Maynard Goodwin** has accepted a full-time staff position at MCC Richmond, Virginia. □ **Rev. Peter Helt** of MCC of the Lehigh Valley, Allentown, Pennsylvania, has a new foster son, **Adam**, his second. □

Rev. Steve Torrence, police chaplain and pastor of MCC Key West, Florida, along with a member of the local police force, captured a six-foot-long boa constrictor in a front yard in Key West. □ Two new trustees, **Jim Breeden** and **Steve Hickerson**, were elected by Samaritan Institute for Religious Studies at its meeting in February. □

Rev. Nancy Wilson, pastor of MCC Los Angeles, presented a five-week "Outing the Bible" series and outreach event at the world-famous Comedy Store in March.

REACTION/REV. ELDER TROY PERRY

UFMCC Responds to Scottish Murders

Rev. Troy Perry, founder and moderator of UFMCC, has responded to the recent murder of 16 Scottish school children and their teacher by calling it a "terrible tragedy."

"Lesbians, gays, and bisexuals in America condemn this violent act and express our sincere sympathy to the people of Dunblane who are suffering through its horrible consequences."

Rev. Perry stressed that the tens of thousands of lesbian and gay Christians of the UFMCC stand united against all mistreatment of children, from simple neglect to sexual abuse and murder.

"Unfortunately, when a man is accused of same-sex child abuse, extremists use the occasion to demonize all gay men and lesbian women," points out Rev. Nancy Wilson, vice moderator of the Fellowship. "In fact, pedophilia is not associated with sexual orientation at all, and it must be condemned rigorously by homosexuals and heterosexuals alike."

GLOBAL OUTREACH/REV. JUDY DAHL

Rev. Sosa Impresses General Council

Rev. Jorge Sosa is both the senior pastor of ICM Renovacion in Mexico City and the area coordinator for



Mexico. During his recent participation as a full voting member of the general council, we could see the wisdom of the Mexico churches in electing him to fill this very important position. Rev. Sosa brings a keen understanding of spirituality and a well-developed leadership style to his role. Mexico has given birth to a new congregation under his leadership, another MCC in the city of Guadalajara. This group is in the initial phase of recognition as a new work in Mexico. Rev. Sosa delighted the



■ **Honored by General Council** at recent meetings were Rev. Baptiste and Ed Paul, who recently completed their service on the Council.

Council with four of the first issues of the Mexico City church's *Reencuentro*.

Discussions with Rev. Sosa indicate that an awareness and appreciation of tithing has taken hold in Mexico and movement towards tithing from the local churches to the area are underway.

Rev. Sosa will be working more closely with the administrator of Global Outreach, particularly with the Spanish speaking countries. He currently supervises Sr. Alejandro Soria of ICM Buenos Aires in his Samaritan coursework in preparation for ministry.

MCC Seattle and MCC Los Angeles are two churches who currently partner with our churches in Mexico and who make monthly contributions to the advancement and development of this ministry. Gracias for your shared gifts and vision!

GLOBAL OUTREACH/REV. JUDY DAHL

Manila on the Move

Once again Rev. Ed Paul has travelled to MCC Manila in the Philippines. The Board of Global Outreach felt a return visit would help to further establish the UFMCC Philippine link in both building relationship and in the ongoing commitment to assist in developing leadership and connection. Rev. Paul's pastoral presence has been an ongoing blessing!

Since Mr. Edgar Mendoza was named lay pastoral leader at MCC Manila in August 1995, the church has begun to thrive. From August through February 1996, 132 people have attended services at MCC Manila.



■ **Members of new church, ICM Guadalajara, Mexico.**

Membership has grown from the 15 former members to 40 total members! Nine women have joined, which is a first, with one woman named to the board of directors. Service is held every Sunday night at 6:30 p.m. Sharing and discussion programs follow the service every Sunday night. Bible studies are being revived and special spiritual and self-development programs are scheduled from time to time.

Aside from the development of the local church, there is a growing vision for the need to expand throughout the Philippines. While the leadership of MCC Manila is cautious to focus on the importance of growing a solid leadership base in Manila, they are beginning to pray earnestly for God to direct them into prayer and outreach once their base is broad enough and secure enough to begin planting groups in other areas of the Philippines. While they are aware that this may be years down the road in actuality, they are open to the leading of the Spirit and are preparing in their hearts and

through their prayers to be led by God.

The board of directors has issued an invitation to Rev. Mel White, who has a wide base of contact in the Philippines, spanning the ecumenical, political and academic arenas of the country. Plans are underway between MCC Manila and Rev. White for a visit to take place sometime this year. With this visit, broad visibility will take place and new doors of opportunity will open up for

MCC in the Philippines. Fortunately, MCC Manila is blessed with the able leadership of Edgar Mendoza who will lead the board and congregation into this next phase of growth and spiritual development.

Maranatha fellowship MCC in Houston is one partner to the church in Manila. They send a monthly contribution through UFMCC Global Outreach which helps assist MCC Manila in

it's growth and development. If you or your church is interested in becoming a part of this exciting work in the Philippines, please contact Rev. Judy Dahl at UFMCC Headquarters.

AIDS MINISTRY REV. STEVE PIETERS

New Hope Tempered by Justice Needs

David Baltimore, a Nobel Laureate in molecular biology has stated, "For the first time, I'm truly optimistic that effective now, HIV is a chronic, man-

ageable disease." Baltimore made this statement on Charlie Rose's interview show on the U.S. Public Broadcasting System, as well as at the recent White House Conference on HIV/AIDS. This is an answer to 15 years of prayer.

Alexandra Levine, M.D., a member of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, said that at the recent White House Conference on HIV/AIDS, for the first time she felt real hope from her colleagues in research and clinical care. As chair of the White House conference sub-session on research and treatment, she feels that real progress has been made. Dr. Levine points out that with all the anti-retroviral drugs, the new protease inhibitors, and the ability to prophylax against many HIV-related opportunistic infections, there is real medical reason to have hope for long, quality life with HIV.

Obviously, we're not at the finish line. There are those whose immune systems are already too badly damaged. Many of us know too many people who have died and who are going to die from the effects of this virus, because progress was not made soon enough. We will be dealing with the devastating effects of multiple losses and unresolved grief for years to come. Ironically, one of the effects of this multiple loss syndrome can be a willingness to ignore or down-play the serious issues of the on-going epidemic.

There are massive areas of the world where these advances in the medical treatment of HIV are economically inaccessible. So we still need to be angry and prophetic, crying out for more justice, more access to the treatments which work, until there is a cure and a vaccine, and all people everywhere are safe from HIV.

DISTRICT CONFERENCES

- Mountain and Plains District** May 23-26, Minneapolis
- Gulf Lower Atlantic District** May 16-19, Chicago; October 3-6, Louisville
- Mid-Atlantic District** May 10-11, Port Deposit; November 1-2 Laurel
- Southeast District** November 1-3, Tampa
- South Central District** May 16-19, Austin
- Eastern Canada District** September 27-29, Toronto
- Australia District** February 21-23, Sydney
- Global Outreach: New Zealand** October 11-13, Christchurch
- Northeast District** November 8-10, Boston
- Northwest District** May 24-27, San Francisco
- Global Outreach: Mexico, Central America** July 26-28, Mexico, D.F.
- Great Lakes District** May 17-19, Nashville; November 15-17, Charlotte
- Southwest District** November 22-24, Phoenix
- European District** November 14-17, Hertford, England

Clearly, the issues related to HIV/AIDS still pose an enormous challenge. Faith calls for angry, prophetic voices, as well as hope. People of faith need to focus the issues and challenge governments so that hope and justice are equal realities in living with HIV/AIDS.

There are numerous political issues still before us that demand our cries for justice. In the U.S., basic civil rights are threatened because the largest employer in the country, the military, now has the legal right to discriminate against people with HIV by firing them. Every member of every MCC in the U.S. is urged to contact their senators and representatives regarding this issue.

Even basic care for persons living with HIV/AIDS is threatened by the erosion of the Ryan White funds. Again, members and friends of U.S. MCC churches need to communicate their concerns about this issue directly to their representatives and senators.

It is one of the challenges of faith to look for signs of hope. And they are here more clearly than ever before. "...Effective now, HIV is a chronic, manageable disease." At the same time, we cannot become complacent about the many justice issues still confronting us in the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This new hope must be sustained by concrete action that will ensure fair and equitable treatment for all persons living with HIV and AIDS.

RESOURCE CENTER ELSA MARTINEZ

First Clearinghouse Project Listings

The UFMCC Resource Center is compiling a list of resources produced by local churches which are available to other congregations. The Clearinghouse project is provided solely as a service of the UFMCC Resource Center. No representation or guarantee of the content, quality, or customer service obtained in ordering resources included in this listing is made. These resources are not screened, reviewed or stocked by the UFMCC Resource Center.

Church Development and Education Handbook A "how to" book for all churches from new works to chartered congregations. Chapters include: Pastoral search, worship, board of directors; training, getting started, inclusiveness, lay ministry, membership

MEMORIAM

We Remember . . .

Karen Gregg passed away on Sunday, March 3 after a long struggle with cancer. Her life partner Sue Kirkland was by her side.

Karen holds a unique place in the history of UFMCC. Not only was she the first woman deacon in the Fellowship and the founder of MCC Long Beach, she was, along with Sue, a pioneer in children's ministry. As an outreach of MCC Los Angeles, Karen founded MCC Long Beach where she served as a deacon, and then student clergy. She was licensed as clergy in 1984, and served as the pastor of MCC Ocean of Life in Costa Mesa, California from 1984 to 1987. In 1987, she returned to MCC Long Beach where she began her work with children, parents, and women with AIDS. In 1990, she was appointed the founding pastor of the Southwest District's Department of Children's Ministry. She coordinated the children's program for General Conference XVI in Phoenix.

In 1994, Karen and Sue moved to Loganville, Georgia, where they were raising their five children while running an antique business.

The Karen Gregg Trust Fund has been created to help provide help for her surviving children. If you would like to make a donation to this trust fund, please send your gift c/o Sue Kirkland, 1979 Highway 81 SW, Loganville, Georgia 30249.

Karen will long be remembered for her sweet, gentle spirit, her deep, sincere faith, and her untiring commitment to children. Throughout her life, she was an inspiring role model for many people. Karen was dearly loved, and will be sorely missed.

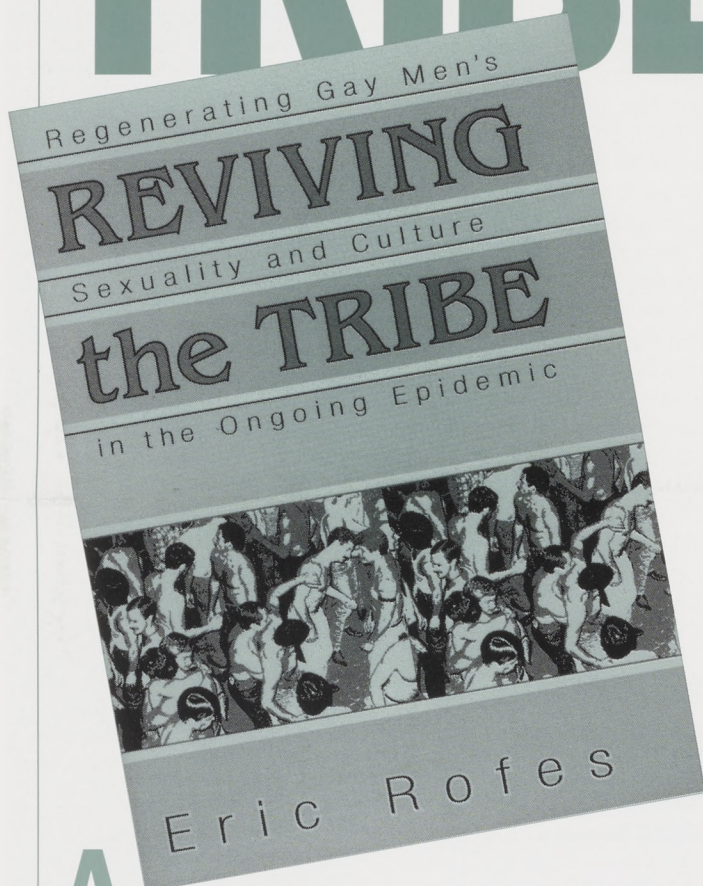
Rev. Phil Crum died from the complications of AIDS on Tuesday, April 2, 1996, surrounded by friends and family. Rev. Crum was living in a hospice in Portland, Oregon, near his sister, Janine Wagoner, his primary caregiver.

Rev. Crum served Metropolitan Community Churches in Minneapolis, San Diego, Long Beach, and Los Angeles (For All The Saints MCC). In San Diego, Phil served on the staff of MCC San Diego, and as Pastor of All Faiths MCC.

Donations may be made in his name "to a favorite charity or to a Metropolitan Community Church."

ERICROFES

REVIVING THE TRIBE



As *Tales of the City* was to the 70's and *And the Band Played On* was to the 80's, so *Reviving the Tribe* will be to the 90's. It is a lens through which we fearlessly scrutinize our communal culture, come to a new understanding of our generation, reorder our priorities, and redirect our activism. Through searching self-examination and a searing critique of sexual politics, Rofes creates a rich portrait of contemporary urban gay lives and a manifesto for community-building which should be universally embraced. — *Rev. Jim Mitulski, MCC San Francisco*

BP9612 \$14.95 plus \$3.95 shipping and handling

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Prov _____

Note: For orders outside the U.S., actual shipping costs are charged, please call for costs. U.S. funds only. California residents add 8.25% sales tax.

Send to: **UFMCC Resource Center**, 5300 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 304, Los Angeles 90029
213/464-5100 Fax 213/464-2123

strategies, treasurer's responsibilities, church growth, buying a building, glossary of UFMCC terms and pastoral contracts, job descriptions, etc. Order from: The Great Lakes District, 1300 Ambridge Drive, Louisville, Kentucky 40207-2410, USA postage paid, US currency, \$25 (US), \$30 (Canada/Mexico), \$35 (other countries).

A Manual for Deacon Training An in-depth guide for training deacons for the local church. Includes teaching resources covering inclusive language, pastor/staff relationships, Christian seasons and the liturgical calendar, spiritual counseling (guidance), sacraments, rites, the gifts of the Spirit, and Biblical exegeses and interpretation. Also includes complete course outline, course application, check lists, and all other appropriate resources for training. Cost: \$35.00. To order contact MCC Louisville, P.O. Box 32474, Louisville, Kentucky 40232 (502) 775-6636.

Homosexuality and the Bible

Featuring Rev. Brent Hawkes, workbook and video. Cost \$25.00 (Canadian Dollars), can be ordered thru MCC Toronto, 115 Simpson Ave. Toronto, Ontario M4K 1A1 CAN 416-406-6228.

STRATEGIC GROWTH REV. ELDER DON EASTMAN

Resources for Growing Churches

How can denominations help local churches grow? In a recent consultation with UFMCC leaders, church development consultant Lyle Schaller indicated that one of the most significant trends today is the shift of denominations to the role of resourcing local churches rather than serving primarily as regulatory bodies. This shift in emphasis is now being seen in the UFMCC's twelve geographic districts. Although districts are responsible for regulatory functions such as establishing standards for churches and issuing clergy credentials, district leaders are beginning to place increasing focus on their role as resource brokers.



In the forefront of such change is Rev. Arlene Ackerman, district coordinator of the UFMCC's Mid-Atlantic District. Since her election to this position in 1992, Rev. Ackerman has given careful attention to three priorities.

First, she maintains close communication with all churches in the district. Her goal is to contact each church at least once each month, and she accomplishes this goal with 98% accuracy. Secondly, Rev. Ackerman strives to build collegiality among churches of the district. This frequently results in churches drawing upon the strengths of each other, which can be especially helpful in times of difficulty or transition. Thirdly, Rev. Ackerman sees a fundamental role of district leaders in connecting the needs of some churches with the resources found in other churches. It is in this capacity that she and other district leaders are effectively acting as resource brokers.

Another key to resourcing local churches is to understand the differences in the needs of various sized congregations. For instance, large churches usually have ample resources of many kinds not frequently found in smaller or even mid-sized congregations. Rev. Ackerman observes, "One of the most important needs of a large church is to fulfill its mission through the sharing of its resources and experience with smaller churches."

A small single-cell church, on the other hand, will confront the questions of why and how it changes from an informal, folksy family of less than 40 people to a celebrative, caring community of more than 100. The larger church may well have some helpful answers for the smaller church, and a resource-oriented district leader can act as a catalyst to connect these churches.

Recognizing the distinctive needs of large, mid-sized, small and single-cell churches enables Rev. Ackerman and other district leaders to provide services, resources and opportunities relevant to all the congregations in the district. In mid-size churches, for example, one of the most useful programs has been the periodic "think tank" experience, open only to the pastors of those sized congregations in the Mid-Atlantic District. Participating pastors are passionately committed to growth in their churches, agree to required reading before the event, and, as a group, set the agenda of the two-day experience. Rev. Ackerman says, "This is a highly focused group with clear agreement on their purpose." Last year, every



■ **Over 200 members** and friends of SunCoast Cathedral MCC in Venice, Florida, gathered in February to celebrate both the first anniversary of the congregation and the dedication of its new facility. Rev. Sherry Kenedy, pastor of SunCoast, led the drive to purchase the property, a former facility owned by Rex Humbard Ministries.

pastor in the district who was eligible for this program chose to participate.

Increased emphasis on providing such resources in this and other UFMCC districts has immense potential for strengthening local congregations. One of the goals of the Strategic Growth Initiative is to develop successful models and useful information that will help district leaders in their efforts to provide resources for local churches. Rev. Arlene Ackerman, who is a member of UFMCC's Strategic Growth Team, brings a wealth of experience to this task. It is not surprising that overall membership in the Mid-Atlantic District has increased by nearly twenty percent in two years.

HANDS ON REV. MICHAEL PIAZZA

Proven Products to Help Your Church

Keeping in Touch has invited church leaders from around the Fellowship to share some of their most valuable



resources with our readers. This first column is by Michael Piazza, pastor of Cathedral of Hope MCC, Dallas.

Someone once said "Leadership is staying one step ahead of the people. Martyrdom is staying more than one step ahead." The truth is that I have had to run like crazy just to keep up with the people at the Cathedral of Hope. Here are some resources that I have found helpful over the years:

INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Robert Schuller Institute for Successful Church Leaders This is held every

February at the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California. The Institute is essentially free—you pay for materials and lunch each day. I have attended four times, and each time I have come away with hundreds of ideas and a renewed image of how the church can change the world.

Leadership Network This organization holds workshops and seminars on various topics. They have an excellent newsletter, and every Monday they send a fax to your church with insightful information. The influence of Peter Drucker L. N. provides lots of help on structural and organizational issues. 800/765-5323.

Fuller Theological Seminary The continuing education division of the seminary is now offering a monthly newsletter and "Pastor's Update" tapes, which have been most helpful. 800/235-2222 ext. 5290.

BOOKS AND TAPES

The Best is Yet to Come by Lyle Schaller and Leith Anderson This is available through Abingdon Press. The four-tape series is some of the most profitable listening I have ever done. You can become a church growth "expert" by listening in your car. Tape number two is entitled "Barriers to Hope in Congregations" and includes topics such as Changing Approaches to Finances, Why People Today Give, Breaking Building Barriers, Hope for Small Churches, How to Change Worship and Hijackers of Vision.

Leading the Congregation and Marketing for Congregations

These two books are part of a series from Abingdon. Both are by Norman

Shawchuck and others, and both books are remarkably relevant to our situation in UFMCC.

Faithquakes by Leonard Sweet

In this easy-to-read book, Dr. Sweet explores with humor and insight what it may be like to do church in the 21st Century. It is one of the most enjoyable and influential books I've read.

Reviving the Tribe by Eric Rofes

This is a "must read" for everyone doing AIDS ministry in the mid-nineties. It is challenging in its insights, but hopeful for a community living with AIDS.

Daily Motivation for African-American Success by Dennis Kimbro

This is a book of daily readings. Although not specifically Christian, the readings do convey teachings that are biblical. It is invaluable as a source of culturally diverse stories and illustrations.

Sacred Journeys, A Woman's Book of Daily Prayer by Jan Richardson

Another book written as a daily devotion. It lead me to encounter some inspiring women I had not known. Following the liturgical year, it is a great book of stories.

WORSHIP RESOURCES

New Century Hymnal From the United Church of Christ, this is the most inclusive, balanced, and functional hymnal I've found. As a result of the quality of this hymnal, we have put our own project on hold.

Chalice Hymnal Produced by the Disciples of Christ, there are only about 20 of the more than 600 hymns that are not inclusive, and they use more evangelical hymns than the *New Century Hymnal*. Ruth Duck was on their hymnal committee.

Fresh Winds of the Spirit, Whispers of God, and Refreshing Rains of the Living Word From Pilgrim Press, by Lavon Baylor, these books are inclusive language worship resources. A full range of prayers, litanies, and even hymns are provided for each of the three years of the liturgical cycle.

Christian Copyright Licensing, Inc.

This allows your church to legally copy music for worship services. There is a fee that is based on the size of the church. The fees are small compared to the fines for illegally copying music! 800/234-2446.

CLASSIFIED

Cost is \$15 for the first 25 words or less. Additional words are .70 per word. Numbers and abbreviations count as words. All classifieds must be prepaid in U.S. funds. Deadline is the 15th of month prior to publication. All copy is subject to the approval of the Editorial NBoard. Appearance of advertising does not imply, nor does it constitute endorsement by UFMCC. Mail ads to Keeping In Touch Classifieds, 5300 Santa Monica Blvd., No. 304, Los Angeles, CA 90029.

Can't Stand Another Winter in the Cold? Christ MCC in beautiful, tropical Miami is seeking a spirit-filled senior pastor to lead its energized congregation into a new era of development. Please write: 7701 SW 76 Ave., Miami, Florida 33143.

Attention Gay Service Members! Know your legal rights! Say nothing, sign nothing, and get legal help if you are ever investigated. Call Service Members Legal Defense Network for confidential counseling. 202/328-FAIR.

Senior Pastor MCC of the Rockies, Denver, Colorado, is seeking a full-time senior pastor. We are a congregation of more than 300 members with the capability for growth to a much larger size with the right leadership. We are looking for strength in the pulpit, leadership skills, and the ability to keep the lay energy focused on a mutually determined course for ministry and growth. For more information and an application, please write or fax: Pastoral Search Committee, P.O. Box 29738, Denver, Colorado 80229. Fax 303/438-9062. All applications must be received by April 30, 1996. All contacts will be kept confidential.

24 Henry Guesthouse is a serene, non-smoking environment close to everything in San Francisco's Gay Castro District. 800/900-5686. Fax 415/864-0406.

Progressive, loving, chartered church family in dynamic southern city seeks full-time pastor to lead all facets of growth. Write Pastoral Search Committee, New Life MCC, P.O. Box 221404, Charlotte, NC 28222-1404 or e-mail tshort@ix.netcom.com.

Three Corners Excel weekend retreat, June 7-9, Nauvoo, Illinois. Don't miss out on our spirit and fun filled weekend. Cost is just \$65 per person. If you cannot attend, please pray about providing a scholarship so someone else can. For more information contact Diana Brown, P.O. Box 109, Hartford, Iowa 50118 or Terry Kruser, 315 Shannon Trail, Davenport, Iowa 52804.

Universal Fellowship of
Metropolitan Community Churches



5300 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 304
Los Angeles, California 90029 USA
Telephone 213/464-5100 Facsimile 213/464-2123

Leadership Conference Registration Form The Gospel for a Global Generation

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Prov., Zip _____

Phones (Day, Evening) _____

Early Registration (postmarked before May 15) \$130.00

Late Registration (postmarked before July 1) \$150.00

On-Site Registration \$170.00

Outside USA discount \$-40.00

Saturday Only \$ 50.00

☐ Check/Money Order Enclosed

☐ Charge to: ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA Acct. No. _____

Signature _____

Expires _____

UFMCC 5300 Santa Monica Blvd, Suite 304, Los Angeles 90029 Phone 213/464-5100 Fax 213/464-2123

APRIL CHRONICLES

Top 20 Tithes

February 1996

1. Cathedral of Hope MCC, Dallas \$8,162.95
2. MCC of the Resurrection, Houston \$3,104.83
3. Sunshine Cathedral MCC, Ft. Lauderdale \$2,553.70
4. MCC Washington, Washington \$2,497.66
5. King of Peace MCC, St. Petersburg \$2,286.01
6. St. Luke's MCC, Jacksonville \$1,899.05
7. MCC of the Rockies, Denver \$1,682.47
8. MCC San Francisco, San Francisco \$1,317.12
9. St. John's MCC, Raleigh \$1,211.68
10. MCC New York, New York \$1,148.13
11. MCC Richmond, Richmond \$1,133.30
12. MCC Long Beach, Long Beach \$1,091.44
13. MCC Seattle, Seattle \$930.13
14. All God's Children MCC, Minneapolis \$916.17
15. First MCC of Atlanta, Atlanta \$908.82
16. MCC Charleston, Charleston \$886.41
17. MCC of Greater St. Louis, St. Louis \$878.62
18. MCC Las Vegas, Las Vegas \$833.48
19. MCC Charlotte, Charlotte \$831.67
20. Agape MCC, Ft. Worth \$831.45

(These figures reflect the 10 percent of each local church's monthly income that is reported to Fellowship headquarters.)

Top 20 Per Capita

February 1996

1. MCC of the Disciples, Washington \$38.30
2. MCC of Greater Hayward, San Lorenzo \$33.08
3. Church of the Resurrection MCC, Chicago \$28.33
4. MCC in the Country, Spring Valley \$26.38
5. MCC of the Redwood Empire, Guerneville \$25.51
6. MCC Eugene, Eugene \$24.46
7. MCC Las Vegas, Las Vegas \$24.37
8. Community Fellowship MCC, Columbia \$23.91
9. Gentle Souls MCC, Kansas City \$23.83
10. MCC Johnson County, Shawnee \$23.81
11. MCC Pueblo, Pueblo \$23.50
12. New Life MCC, Charlotte \$21.43
13. MCC of the Palm Beaches, West Palm Beach \$21.04
14. St. Luke's MCC, Jacksonville \$21.03
15. MCC of the Lehigh Valley, Allentown \$20.91
16. Eternal Light MCC, Lacey \$20.77
17. MCC Charleston, Charleston \$20.61
18. Reconciliation MCC, Grand Rapids \$19.86
19. MCC of the Gentle Shepherd, Vancouver \$19.45
20. Lexington's MCC, Lexington \$19.32

(These figures reflect the average individual weekly offerings to the local church.)